

MULTIMEDIA



UNIVERSITY

STUDENT ID NO

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# MULTIMEDIA UNIVERSITY

## SUPPLEMENTARY EXAMINATION

TRIMESTER 1, 2015/2016

**DEN5018 – ENGLISH**  
(All Diploma Students)

18 NOV 2015  
2.30 PM – 4.30 PM  
(2 HOURS)

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### INSTRUCTIONS TO STUDENTS

1. This question paper consists of **SIX** pages only.
2. Answer **ALL** questions in **Sections A and B** and answer only **ONE** question in **Section C**.
3. Write all your answers in the Answer Booklet provided.

## SECTION A: READING AND VOCABULARY [25 MARKS]

**Instructions:** Read the passage below and answer the questions that follow.

### Bird Species Facing Extinction Signal Threats to Human Health

- 1 Birds are the planet's superheroes, built for survival. The ice of Antarctica does not **faze** them, nor does the heat of the tropics. They thrive in the desert, in swamps, on the open ocean, on sheer rock faces, on treeless tundra, atop airless mountaintops and in barren soil. Some fly non-stop for days on end. With just the feathers on their backs, they crisscross the hemisphere, avoiding hurricanes and predators along the way and arriving at a precise spot, year after year. They have penetrated nearly every ecosystem on Earth and then tailored their own size, habits, and colours to each one, pollinating flowers, dispersing seeds, controlling bugs, cleaning up carrion and fertilising plants. 5
- 2 However, for all their varied powers, birds are in trouble; more than 1,300 species of birds are threatened with extinction, and the status of most of those is deteriorating globally. Furthermore, many others are in worrying decline, from the tropics to the Poles. In North America's agricultural areas, populations of grassland birds such as sweet-trilling meadowlarks are declining, along with those everywhere else on the planet. Graceful fliers like swifts and swallows that catch insects while they fly are showing widespread declines in Europe and North America. The number of eagles, vultures and other raptors is decreasing throughout Africa. Colonies of seabirds such as murres and puffins on the North Atlantic are vanishing, and so are shorebirds, including red knots in the Western Hemisphere. 10
- 3 Sandpipers, spoonbills, pelicans and storks, dependent on the muddy and sandy areas exposed between tide levels of Asia's Yellow Sea, are under threat. Australian and South American parrots are struggling, and some of the iconic penguins that are considered as symbols of Antarctica are facing starvation. Much of their decline is driven by the loss of places to live and breed such as marshes, rivers, forests and plains or by insufficient food supply. However, the birds are telling us 15 about new threats to the environment and potentially to human health in the coded language of biochemistry.
- 4 Through analysis of the inner workings of birds' cells, scientists have been identifying increasingly urgent signals from ecosystems around the world. Like the canaries that miners once thrust into coal mines to check for poisonous gases, birds provide the starker clues in the animal kingdom about whether humans too, may be harmed by toxic substances. Furthermore, they prophesy what might happen to us as the load of carbon-based, planet-warming gases in the atmosphere and oceans climb 20 ever higher.
- 5 Rachel Carson was the earliest and best-known scientist to link the fate of birds to that of humans. Alerted by reports of sharp declines in birds of prey and songbirds, she began to examine the effects of the DDT pesticide. It was the first modern synthetic pesticide, widely used after World War II to control mosquitoes and other insects. Her book *Silent Spring*, published in 1962, explained that DDT moved up through food chains, from the insects it was designed to kill to the 25 30 35 40

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creatures that ate them. It accumulated inexorably and unceasingly in tissues, organs, and fats in top predators such as peregrine falcons, ospreys, bald eagles, and pelicans. By 1972, after public uproar, DDT was banned in the United States and eventually banned around the world except in malaria-prone countries, mostly in Africa. Yet, DDT's legacy remains. A recent study reported that birds of prey in South Carolina still carry as much DDT and other legacy pesticides in their bodies as they did before such chemicals were banned in the 1970s, suggesting that exposure has not declined substantially over the past 40 years.

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6 Moreover, in the small town of St. Louis, Michigan, near an old chemical plant, robins are still dropping dead due to DDT poisoning, registering some of the highest levels ever recorded in wild birds. As biochemical analysis has become more precise, the idea that birds tell us about our own health has gained even more scientific evidence. Much of that work stemmed from studies conducted by Canadian Wildlife Service toxicologist, Glen Fox, and others on the Great Lakes which is the world's first and biggest testing ground for contaminants and birds such as terns and seagulls. Fox's work began with fish-eating birds. He found high levels of polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) in the lakes and their sediments and enlarged thyroids that were producing little hormones in the birds.

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7 By the late 1980s, there were so many researches about chemicals in the Great Lakes that zoologist Theo Colborn began examining the studies to see if she could see the big picture. The results were stunning and unbelievable. The Great Lakes' top 16 or 17 predatory birds were vanishing. The problem stemmed from assaults on the endocrine system, which controls hormones and reproduction. That, in turn, was linked to man-made substances in the water and the birds' prey. Hence, the birds' ability to reproduce crashed in multiple ways, and the concept of the "endocrine disruptor" was born.

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8 Studies have suggested that those same chemicals may also be altering human hormones. For example, a pregnant mother's load of chemicals passes to her baby while it is still in the womb. These chemicals are able to alter the development of a baby's brain, leading to lower intelligence levels of the baby and also affect its reproductive and immune systems. Some studies also suggest a link between endocrine disruptors and a greater risk of prostate and breast cancers and other diseases. Other researches even suggest that chemicals are able to switch genes on and off, affecting grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

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*Adapted from Mitchell, A. (2014). The 1300 bird species facing extinction signal threats to human health.*  
Retrieved from <http://news.nationalgeographic.com/news/2014/08/140825-bird-environment-chemical-contaminant-climate-change-science-winged-warning/>

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**Question 1: Contextual Clues (5 marks)**

**Instructions:** *Provide a word from the reading passage for each definition below.*

**Example:** upset or shock

**(paragraph 1)** word: faze

- a) becoming worse (paragraph 2)
- b) something that is symbolic (paragraph 3)
- c) the act of predicting the future (paragraph 4)
- d) something handed down or received from the previous generation (paragraph 5)
- e) surprising or shocking (paragraph 7)

**Question 2: True or False (5 marks)**

**Instructions:** *For each statement, write (T) if the statement is true and (F) if the statement is false.*

- a) Extreme climatic conditions do not affect the survival of birds.
- b) The bird population is still strong because of their superior powers.
- c) Birds reveal to us about the dangers of the environment in their own way.
- d) Rachel Carson was the only scientist who researched the connection between humans and birds.
- e) The poison of DDT still lingers in birds even after many decades.

**Continued...**

**Question 3: Comprehension Questions (15 marks)**

**Instructions:** Answer the following questions in **COMPLETE** sentences.

- a) How are birds useful to the Earth and its inhabitants? (2 marks)
- b) State two factors that contribute to the reduction in the number of various birds. (2 marks)
- c) Explain the purpose of sending canaries into coal mines. (2 marks)
- d) i. What was DDT pesticide used for initially? (1 mark)  
ii. State four effects of DDT pesticide on birds and the environment. (4 marks)
- e) What does the word 'It' in line 41 refer to? (1 mark)
- f) What is the main idea of paragraph seven? (1 mark)
- g) How do the chemicals harm the unborn babies? (2 marks)

**Continued...**

**SECTION B: GRAMMAR - TENSES [10 MARKS]**

**Instructions:** For questions 1-10, read the text and choose the best answer.

*Example:* (0) C

**What Makes The World Go Round**

Banknotes (0) \_\_\_\_\_ a widely circulated form of money only in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, but even then, they were mostly used to transfer funds. Having met their objective of being converted into hard money, they (1) \_\_\_\_\_ often destroyed in full or in part. In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, with the introduction of the concept of “fiduciary” (trust for value or currency), where a component such as a gold reserve against which a certain amount of currency could be floated, paper money became more widely accepted.

Currently, banknotes (2) \_\_\_\_\_ generally issued by a “central bank” or a government’s treasury. However, this is not exclusively the case; certain commercial banks continue to issue banknotes for circulation in parts of the United Kingdom. Sometimes, other governmental bodies are responsible for the issuance of paper money. For example, several decades ago, The Board of Commissioners of Currency (3) \_\_\_\_\_ notes in the British colonies of Malaya and Borneo, while Singapore maintained a similar office after it became an independent country. It was only in 2002 that the body (4) \_\_\_\_\_ into the Monetary Authority of Singapore.

Until now, forgery (5) \_\_\_\_\_ a persistent problem with paper money, and historically remarkable precautions have been taken to ward it off. Seventeen-century European banks embossed seals into the paper. Throughout the 18<sup>th</sup> century, American colonies such as New Jersey (6) \_\_\_\_\_ herb print on the back as a security device. By the 19<sup>th</sup> century, specialised printing technique, involving metal plates etched with extremely intricate designs and elements such as watermarking (7) \_\_\_\_\_ introduced as safeguards against forgery. Contemporary banknotes carry a range of security features such as “microprinting”, holographic images and optically sensitive ink that (8) \_\_\_\_\_ colour when viewed at different angles.

While paper remains to be the most familiar “template” for printing banknotes, it is by no means exclusively so. In the 1920s, cloth was used by a savings bank in Bielefeld, Germany to print emergency notes, while in Russian-administered Alaska, sealskin was used to print money. In the last 25 years, many countries (9) \_\_\_\_\_ using notes made of polymer or plastic, as they are more durable than paper notes.

Living in a world of “electronic money”, it is a wonder what future money will be like. Some argue that people (10) \_\_\_\_\_ in a world without coins and banknotes. The future may be “cashless”, but as expressions of human endeavour, historic forms of money are “priceless”!

*Adapted from Bhandare, S. (2012). What makes the world go round. Asian Geographic , 88 (3), p. 32.*

**Continued...**

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|-----|-------------------|-------------------|------------------|----------------------|
| 0.  | A. becomes        | B. will become    | C. <u>became</u> | D. had become        |
| 1.  | A. are            | B. were           | C. will be       | D. has been          |
| 2.  | A. had been       | B. were           | C. are           | D. will be           |
| 3.  | A. issued         | B. issue          | C. is issuing    | D. has been issuing  |
| 4.  | A. is absorbed    | B. has absorbed   | C. was absorbed  | D. will be absorbing |
| 5.  | A. remains        | B. was remained   | C. has remained  | D. is remaining      |
| 6.  | A. had been using | B. has been using | C. is using      | D. will be using     |
| 7.  | A. are            | B. were           | C. will be       | D. have been         |
| 8.  | A. changes        | B. is changing    | C. was changing  | D. will be changing  |
| 9.  | A. started        | B. starts         | C. have started  | D. had started       |
| 10. | A. are living     | B. will live      | C. live          | D. has lived         |

**SECTION C: WRITING [25 MARKS]**

**Instructions:** Write an essay on ONE of the following questions. The length of your essay should be about 350 words.

1. Why do people keep pets? Discuss.
  
2. What are the effects of moving to a new town or city to a university student?

**End of Paper**